

Newsletter No. 2
March 2000

SECOND PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

WisDOT and CH2M HILL will host the second public information meeting (PIM) on Thursday, March 16th, 2000, at St. Columba Church (McLaughlin Hall), WIS 164 (Highway Q/164 intersection). The open-house meeting will be from 4 to 8 p.m. You may stop in anytime between those hours. Project staff will be available to review exhibits and answer questions. The purpose of the meeting is to update you on study activities that have occurred since the first public meeting in June, and to obtain your input on the latest range of alternatives being considered.

STUDY UPDATE

First Public Information and Project Advisory Committee meetings conducted

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) conducted the first Public Information Meeting (PIM) and Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the WIS 164 study on June 29 and August 10, 1999. About 155 people attended the first PIM. Attendees expressed concerns about induced traffic resulting from the change from County J to WIS 164. Also, concerns were passed along that other routes could serve the demand being placed on WIS 164.



The Project Advisory Committee (PAC) is comprised of local landowners, elected officials, and members of the study team. At the first PAC meeting, the study team reviewed input received at the first PIM and discussed early data gathering conducted. Finally, the PAC reviewed early alternatives and the overall study process. Members of the PAC urged the study team to review all possible alternatives, including reduced speed limits and other corridors, as part of the project study. The PAC also requested that the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) model the corridor to determine the amount of traffic that could be diverted from WIS 164 if a new corridor were developed elsewhere in the area.

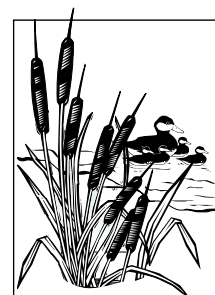
The study corridor has been extended south to I-94

Originally, the study corridor extended from Capitol Drive (Waukesha County) to a point north of County E (Washington County). Because several alternatives suggested at the first PIM and PAC involved the area south of Capitol Drive, it was agreed that the entire corridor should be handled as one study. Engineering and environmental studies have been started throughout the corridor; findings will be discussed at the March 16 PIM.

WisDOT selects Environmental Impact Statement as the appropriate document type

WisDOT, in consultation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), has decided to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the WIS 164 corridor study. The EIS will discuss the:

- deficiencies along the WIS 164 corridor,
- range of alternatives that address existing and future deficiencies,
- existing natural and "built" environment in the project corridor,
- social, economic and environmental impacts of proposed WIS 164 improvements, and
- project's public involvement and agency coordination activities.



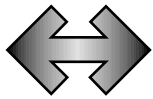
The WIS 164 EIS will not analyze the Ackerville improvements immediately north of this project. The Ackerville project impacts are discussed in a separate document known as an Environmental Assessment. If you would like more information on that Environmental Assessment, please contact Wafa Elqaq, at 414-548-5687.

WisDOT establishes traffic volume threshold for four-lane expansion

Using federal design guidelines, rural two-lane roads are normally considered for expansion when volumes exceed 7,000 vehicles per day, and suburban/urban two-lane roads are considered for expansion when volumes exceed 13,000 vehicles per day. After reviewing public input and existing and future development plans from study area communities, WisDOT has determined that the corridor is already, or is transitioning to, a suburban setting. Therefore, WisDOT has determined that WIS 164 should not be expanded to four lanes until traffic reaches the 13,000 vehicles per day threshold.

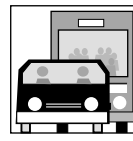
WisDOT selects suburban roadway width for WIS 164 improvements

At the first PIM, the project team presented a range of possible widths for expanding WIS 164. The widths varied from 200 to 300 feet (total right-of-way) for a rural roadway to 120 to 160 feet for a suburban facility. Given WisDOT's decision that the WIS 164 corridor is or will transition to a suburban setting, the project team has decided that the rural width would not be appropriate for the study corridor. Proposed improvements will, therefore, generally require between 120 to 160 feet of total right-of-way. WIS 164 in Waukesha County currently has 100 feet of right-of-way. As a result, additional needs could vary from 20 to 40 feet in Waukesha County to as much as 100 feet additional in Washington County.



SEWRPC traffic model completed

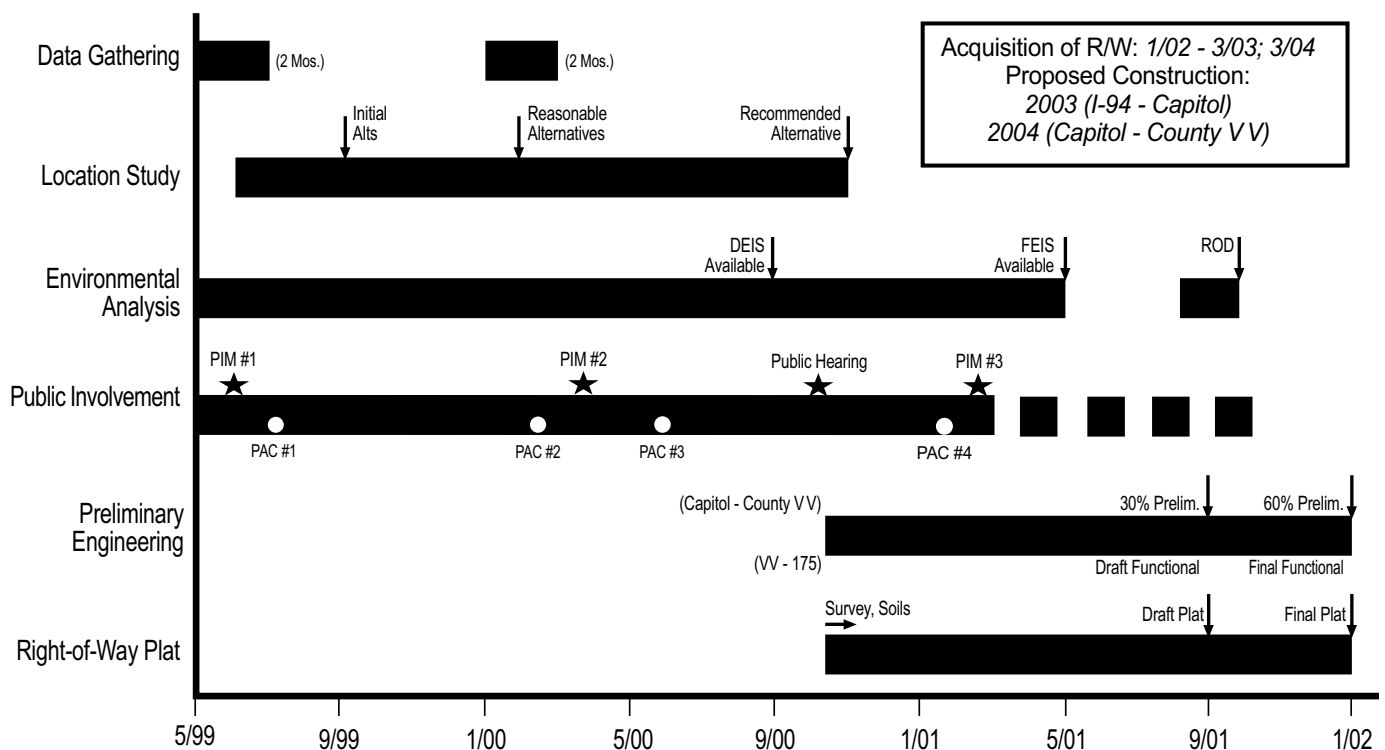
As noted, PAC members recommended that SEWRPC determine how much traffic would be diverted from WIS 164 if a north-south corridor connecting US 41/45 in Menomonee Falls to WIS 74 were developed. The modeling indicates the following:



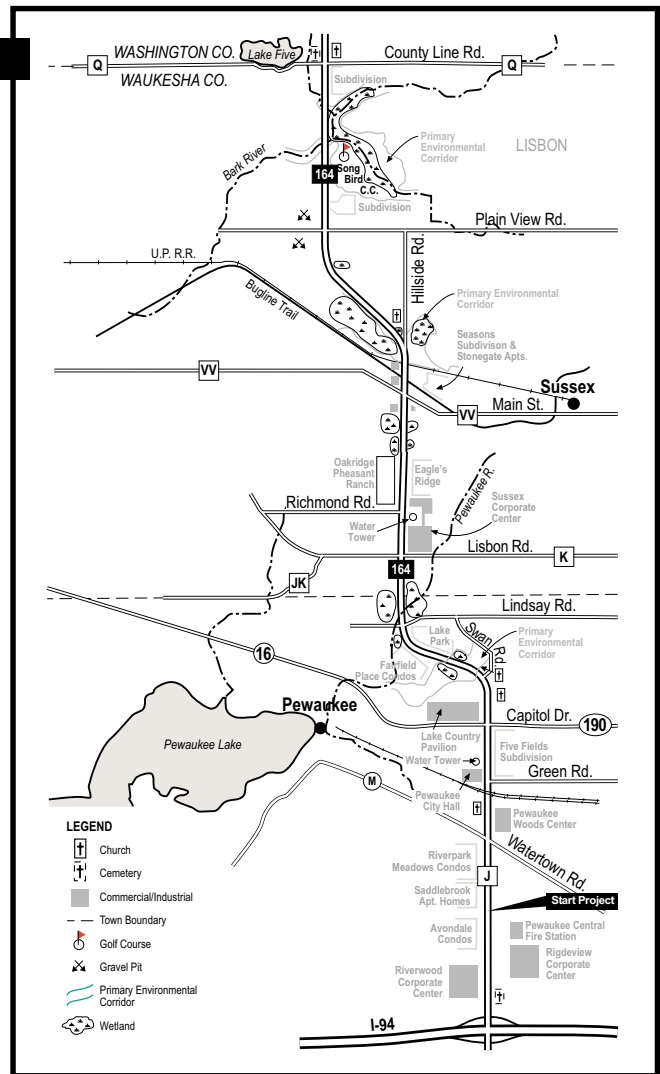
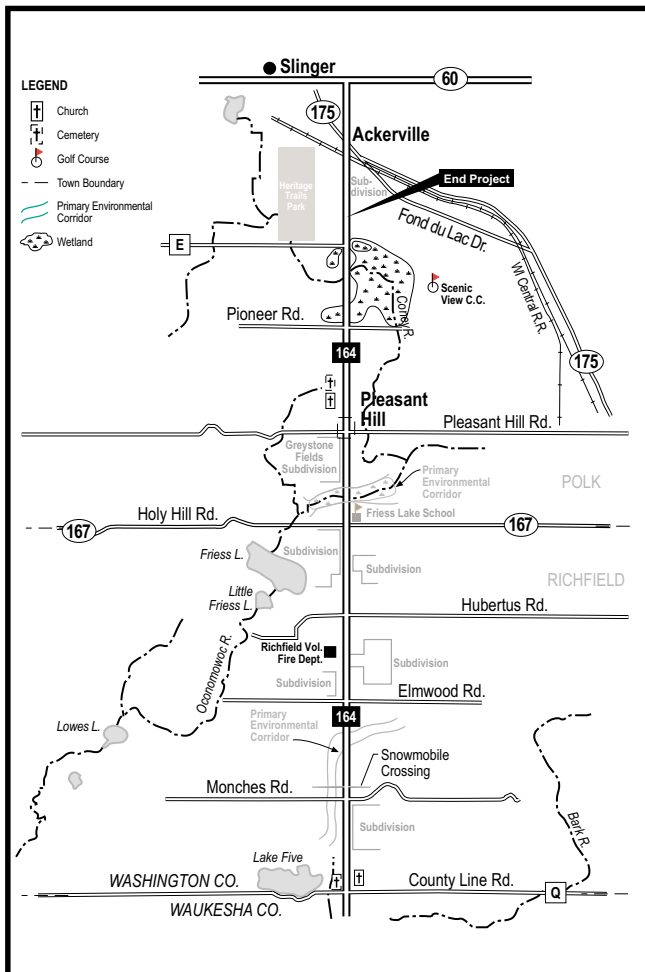
- If the new north-south corridor (also known as the Power Corridor) were not constructed and County J and WIS 164 were not improved, between 5 and 20 percent of the future traffic in the Waukesha County portion of the study area and 0 to 10 percent in Washington County would use a different road.
- If the Power Corridor were not constructed and the speed limit in the corridor were reduced to 45 mph, between 10 and 33 percent of future traffic would select another route.
- If the Power Corridor were constructed, future volumes on a two-lane or four-lane County J and WIS 164 would decrease by up to 10 percent. The 11,000 to 21,000 vehicles that are projected to use the Power Corridor in 2025 would be diverted mostly from directly adjacent parallel and intersecting roads such as Counties Y and V rather than from roads farther west such as WIS 164 and WIS 83.

Because of existing high traffic volumes between County VV and I-94, constructing the Power Corridor or reducing the speed limit on WIS 164 would have no effect on

STUDY SCHEDULE



Project Limits - Washington and Waukesha County



the short-term need to widen the highway. Existing volumes in this area are enough to justify the proposed expansion to four lanes as early as 2003. From Plainview Road to County E, capacity expansion could be post-

poned until 2025 or beyond. More detailed information about the SEWRPC modeling results will be presented at the March 16 PIM.

PROJECT CONTACTS

If you have any questions regarding this study, you may contact one of the following study team members:

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